

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 15, 2005. Claims 19-30, 40, 46 and 49 are now pending in the application, of which Claims 19, 40 and 46 are independent. Claims 19, 20, 40 and 46 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 19-24, 26, 40, 46 and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 5,991,276 (Yamamoto) in view of U.S. Patents 5,848,134 (Sekiguchi) and 5,673,205 (Brunson), and Claims 25 and 27-30, as being obvious from *Yamamoto* in view of *Sekiguchi*, *Brunson* and U.S. Patent 6,404,747 (Berry). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested, in view of the following.

The present invention concerns controlling communications in a video-conferencing environment. It is contemplated that the present invention can be used in an environment in which some or all terminals are dedicated videoconference terminals that communicate using moving image data and voice data, but also in an environment in which at least some terminals are simply personal computers that communicate using still image data and text data, but not voice data. In the latter kind of environment, it is necessary to find a way for the personal computers to be able to participate in a videoconference session. With this in mind, the present invention controls distribution methods for distributing data based on the type of second terminal that the data is to be communicated to. For instance, if the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, then generated text data and a generated image file are distributed to the second terminal. On the other hand, if

the second terminal is a dedicated videoconference terminal, then received image data and voice data are distributed to the second terminal. As a result, users of personal computers who do not have videoconferencing capabilities can participate in a videoconference session using text chat in conjunction with generated still images, thanks to the control apparatus recited in Claim 19 (discussed below).

Independent Claim 19 is directed to a data communication control apparatus for communicating with a plurality of terminals, the claimed apparatus comprising a receiving device adapted to receive image data and voice data, or text data from a first terminal, and a voice recognition device adapted to recognize the voice data and to generate text data based upon the recognized voice data. An image file generating device generates an image file on the basis of the received image data. A control device controls distribution of data corresponding to what kind of terminal a second terminal is, and a data distributing device performs distribution, as follows. The data distributing device (i) distributes the generated text data and the generated image file to the second terminal, if the receiving device receives image data and voice data from the first terminal and the second terminal can communicate via at least text data and an image file, (ii) distributes the received text data to the second terminal, if the receiving device receives text data from the first terminal and the second terminal can communicate via at least text data, and (iii) distributes the received image data and voice data to the second terminal, if the receiving device receives image data and voice data from the first terminal and the second terminal can communicate via at least voice data and image data. Also, if voice data and image data are received from the first terminal and the first terminal can communicate via at least text data and can display both first text data and second text data on one window (where the

first text data is text data generated by the voice recognition device on the basis of the voice data received from the first terminal and the second text data is text data generated by the voice recognition device on the basis of voice data received from another terminal or si text data received from such other terminal), then the data distributing device further distributes to the first terminal.

By virtue of the structure recited in Claim 19, the data communication control apparatus can generate text data (a) based on voice data received from a first terminal or distribute the text data (a) to a second terminal if the second terminal can communicate at least via text data. The data communication control apparatus can also distribute the text data (a) to the first terminal if the first terminal can communicate via at least text data and display both text data (a) and text data (b) on one window, such as window 53 in Fig. 3; it should be noted that text data (b) is either text data (b1), which is generated based on voice data received from another terminal, or text data (b2), which is itself received from another terminal. Accordingly, the first terminal, for example, a dedicated videoconferencing terminal, can display not only text data (b) based on data from another terminal but also the generated text data (a) generated by the voice recognition device on the basis of the voice data received from the first terminal.

As a result, a user of the first terminal can read text data (a) based on that user's own voice data (that is, what that user has introduced into the system as voice data) and by this means can draw up the conference minutes easily.

Independent Claims 40 and 46 are method and recording medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 19.

The prior art relied upon by the Examiner has been adequately discussed in previous papers, and it is not believed necessary to repeat that discussion in full. Suffice it to say that Applicant agrees with the Office Action in regard to the respects in which *Yamamoto* and *Sekiguchi*, taken separately or together only with each other, fail to meet the terms of Claim 19, prior to the present amendments to that claim. Those distinctions still obtain.

Nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Brunson* that would teach or suggest what is missing from *Yamamoto* and *Sekiguchi* as references against Claim 19. In particular, nothing has been found in any of those three patents that would teach or suggest distributing a first body of text data (a), based on recognized voice data from a dedicated videoconferencing terminal, to the dedicated videoconferencing terminal, and in addition distributing text data (a) to another terminal, as is recited in Claim 19. Still less has anything been found or pointed out in any of those three patents that would teach or suggest any arrangement capable of displaying both text data (a) and a second body of text data (b) that is based on data from another terminal, on one chat-text window of the dedicated video conferencing terminal, as is also recited in Claim 19 (nor does any of those patents appear to present any motivation for doing so). Even if *Brunson* is deemed to show playing back a soundtrack of a video message to a recipient and conveying an image frame to the recipient in response to receipt of a request from the recipient, that would not provide any suggestion to attempt to achieve an arrangement that performs the mentioned functions of the data distributing device of the apparatus of Claim 19, much less any suggestion of a way to do so.

In light of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, independent Claims 19, 40 and 46 are believed to be allowable.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's attorney of record may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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